



Taylor Glenn and Neil Freeze: 2010-2011 Gussin Spiritan Division Students of the Year



TAYLOR GLENN
 ENGLISH/PUBLIC RELATIONS



NEIL FREEZE
 HISTORY

2010 - 2011 SPIRITAN DIVISION STUDENTS (PARTIAL ROSTER)



Taylor Glenn and Neil Freeze were selected as the 2010-2011 Gussin Spiritan Division Students of the Year. Glenn, an alumna of Shady Side Academy in Fox Chapel, is a sophomore from New Kensington, PA, double majoring in English and Public Relations. She is also a sprinter on the University's track and field team and a member of the University's dance squad. Regarding the impact of the Gussin Spiritan Division on her success, Glenn states, "I really benefitted from the summer semester. The people I met that summer are now some of my closest friends."

**"RECEIVING THIS AWARD IS A REALLY
 BIG HONOR."
 —TAYLOR GLENN**

After graduating from Duquesne, Glenn plans to attend Columbia Law School in New York City. Neil Freeze, a third-year history major, is a native of Washington County and an alumnus of Canon McMillan High School. Like Glenn, notification of his selection as Student of the Year came as a pleasant surprise.

**"I KNEW THAT I HAD SOME TOUGH
 COMPETITION; I'M THANKFUL I MADE
 THE FINAL CUT."
 —NEIL FREEZE**

Freeze credits the Gussin Spiritan Division for assisting him in making a smooth transition from high school to college. "I like the fact that they look out for you and give you proper guidance," remarks Freeze. In addition to his academic pursuits, Freeze is a cultural ambassador to the international student community. Describing the ambassadorial program, he states, "Our goal is to attract more international students to Duquesne University. We brainstorm ways to inform prospective international students that Pittsburgh and Duquesne University are a perfect fit for them." When considering post-graduation plans, Freeze intends to serve as an officer in the U.S. Marine Corp. Both Glenn and Freeze will be initiating campus service programs as GSD Students of the Year. ■



Introduction to the Gussin Spiritan Division of Academic Programs

Standing as a hallmark of Duquesne's dedication to education for the mind, the heart, and the spirit, named for the Spiritan congregation, and endowed by alumnus, Dr. Robert Gussin and his wife, Dr. Patricia Gussin, the Gussin Spiritan Division of Academic Programs specializes in helping students of varying backgrounds develop their full potential as students and citizens of the world. The Division's performance-tested system of personal guidance and learning assistance supports the student's transition from high school diploma to college degree.

The Gussin Spiritan Division helps freshmen and other students new to Duquesne maximize their chances of college success. While there are many factors that will impact that success, chief among them is a solid transition to college life. Successful college transitions are made when the student:

- Adapts to new learning environments and new learning situations.
- Understands the role of personal responsibility in college, career, and life success.
- Refines the academic skills necessary for college success—reading, writing, editing and critical thinking.
- Relies on high-quality academic support such as tutoring, counseling and other interventions should problems arise.

The Gussin Spiritan Division of Academic Programs operates on a cohort model. While the Division freshmen are immersed in the same Core curriculum as other Duquesne first-year students, Spiritan Core courses are taught by University faculty hand-picked by the Division because of their commitment to the Division's approach to student development.

The Gussin Spiritan Division student's transition from high school to college begins with a summer semester during which the student is registered for Core English 101, University 101, Research and Information Skills, and Academic Strategies. The student returns to campus for the fall semester with a University transcript showing six earned credits and with an armful of friendships developed during the summer semester.

The academic year continues this development through coursework, academic advisement, tutoring when needed, and counseling. It culminates with an end-of-year review during which assessment of academic and affective growth is discussed with the student. Assuming all Division requirements are completed and all prerequisites for the intended major are satisfied, the student transfers to the college or one of the schools to pursue that major. Otherwise, the student is retained in the Division until all requirements and/or prerequisites are met.

That many Division students have gone on to complete their degrees at Duquesne or elsewhere—and some have pursued or are pursuing graduate degrees—attests to the soundness of our approach to academic and affective development. Obviously, the transition Gussin Spiritan Division students make during this first-year lays the foundation for their progress toward their degree.

Our work is intended to help the student selected for admission to the Division accept personal responsibility for academic success or failure. Their success is our success. ■



Xavier Johnson Awarded 2010-2011 Weber Scholarship

By: Michael Dern and Uhuru Hotep

Congratulations to Xavier Johnson who was awarded the 2010-2011 Michael P. Weber Memorial Scholarship. Johnson, a native of south Philadelphia, resides in Allentown, PA and is a 2010 alumnus of Allentown Central Catholic High School. Though news of this scholarship came as a surprise, he is very grateful to be this year's recipient. "I was really shocked. I did not expect it, as there are many deserving students within the Gussin Spiritan Division," says Johnson.

"BEING A FRESHMAN YOU HAVE TO BALANCE A LOT OF THINGS, AND I THINK I HAVE DONE THAT WELL."

He believes his time management skills are one of the pillars of his success at Duquesne University.

Johnson successfully balances academics, employment, and athletics. He is an employee in the Michael P.

Weber Learning Skills Center as well as a member of the University's Track and Field team. Johnson has enjoyed his freshman year. Two of his memorable courses were Intercultural Communication, which focused on global diversity, and Imaginative Literature and Critical Writing, which gave Johnson the skills to analyze poetry and short stories.

The Gussin Spiritan Division assists incoming freshman in the transition from secondary to higher education. Johnson views the Division as a pathway to success. He advises, "Be open to a lot of things, and take advantage of all the opportunities the Division has to offer."

Though he is only in his freshman year, Johnson already has post graduation plans. "I would like to go to law school to be a corporate lawyer. When I am in a good position, I would like to give back to the Gussin Spiritan Division, like the program has done for me. I really appreciate it."

The Weber Scholarship originated in 2003 and is funded by the family of the late Michael P. Weber. Dr. Weber served as the Vice President of Academic Affairs at Duquesne University from 1987-2001. He supported the Learning Skills Center and the assistance the Center offers Duquesne University students. The Center pays homage to his support as the Learning Skills Center now bears his name. ■



XAVIER JOHNSON
PRE-LAW

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The mission of the Gussin Spiritan Division is teaching, caring and building futures through a community of excellence.